

Temescal News & Views

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Temescal News & Views is published bimonthly and distributed to 3,000 households, schools and businesses.

Our Mission

The mission of TNT is to enhance the quality of life in our diverse community through revitalization of our homes, businesses, schools and public services by providing an ongoing forum for community education, interaction and empowerment.

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Crime Wave Hits Temescal

A wave of assaults, robberies, and home break-ins in Temescal has rattled nerves and prompted calls for increased awareness. While we have no official statistics as we go to print, the Temescal Families Internet group has been abuzz for the last two months with a large number of reported crimes. The majority of the reports are daytime street assaults by youths, ages 13-18, in groups of three to four.

On the weekend of February 10-13, for example, three youths single-handedly carried out a violent weekend crime spree of an estimated 30 robberies in Temescal, Rockridge and along Piedmont Avenue. Police apprehended the youths following a dusk mugging at Webster and 45th Streets on February 13. Even with these arrests, criminal activity continues to be a problem in our neighborhood.

A number of people are posting and leafletting throughout Temescal to alert neighbors. The Oakland Police Department recommends carrying a whistle and using it if you see a crime in progress. Call 911 from your home or 777-3211 from your cell phone if you're a victim of or witness to a crime. Report suspicious activity at the Police Department's non-emergency number, 777-3333.

The Temescal Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) is holding its Steering Committee meeting on Thursday, March 9, at Faith Presbyterian Church (430 49th Street at Webster) from 7-9 PM. Oakland police will be present and the meeting is open to all. Call Officer Debi Mack at 777-8647 for more information. If you miss this meeting, the NCPC holds meetings on the second Thursday of each month at the same location.

Forming a Neighborhood Watch group on your block helps residents meet one another and learn about crime prevention. Call Brenda Ivey at 777-8621 to schedule training meetings on starting a Neighborhood Watch in your area.

If you would like to help post flyers, call Linda DiBona at 599-7833. While leafletting this week, this writer met three neighbors—one friend and two new faces. Of the three, two personally knew recent robbery victims, while the third person wasn't aware of the current crime wave. Get to know the people who live around you so we can look out for each other!

Helpful web sites include the Temescal Families Group (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/temescal_families); the NCPC site (www.temescal.us); and the North Oakland Police site (www.northoaklandpolice.com)—go to 12X Temescal beat). — Lisa McElroy

Light Pylons Sculpture Approved for Studio One Art Center

Readers may be interested in what's happening these days at Studio One on 45th Street. The now sad-looking boarded-up historic pile is finally about to begin its planned \$12 million transformation. In the meantime, we have final design approval for the public art piece of the project. The Oakland City Council ratified sculptor Cork Marcheschi's design following the results of a neighborhood survey initiated by Councilmember Jane Brunner.

The approval is the culmination of a process that began over a year ago with 51 proposals from artists all across the country and included many public meetings, community workshops, and artist refinements. Installation of the completed sculptures will occur following the renovation of the Studio One building, expected to be finished by late 2007.

Marcheschi's design consists of six lighted pylon sculptures, each about ten feet tall and arranged in two rows flanking the landscaped "front yard" of the art center. They are to be constructed of stainless steel plates and a rugged dichroic glass and translucent safety glass laminate. Each pylon will be softly lit by a low-power xenon light source. By day the dichroic glass exterior will reflect and refract a wide range of subtle colors that will vary according to the vantage point of the viewer. By night the sculptures, illuminated from the inside and equipped with separate controllers, will display gradually changing colors independent of one another.

Marcheschi has been creating large-scale public art with an emphasis on the use of light for 25 years. He earned his MFA in Sculpture at nearby California College of the Arts.

To follow developments around the building's renovation, visit Friends of Studio One at www.friendsofstudioone.org.

—Patrick Daughton, Friends of Studio One

Temescal Telegraph Business Improvement District Celebrates its First Year

The Temescal Telegraph Community Association proudly completed its first year of operation managing the Business Improvement District, voted in by property owners in 2004. And what a productive first year it's been! Surely, the community has noticed improvements and highlights which include:

- the crew in lime-green vests sweeping the sidewalks and providing landscaping on a regular basis.
- the business directory included in this month's TNV issue and available at different locales throughout the community.
- the first annual Holiday Open House, December 15, when merchants lit up their businesses and provided a cheerful welcome to patrons; Santa greeted children with candy, and local carolers and toy soldiers added holiday ambiance.

The dedicated volunteer Board and committees have been working with the City's various agencies throughout the year to ensure City services are up to par. Its 2006 action plan includes opening a Farmer's Market, enhanced events and marketing, district signage, and improving security.

The recent report of increasing crime in Oakland is prompting the Association to strongly consider allocating a portion of its budget to making Telegraph Avenue safer. These activities and more can only be accomplished if volunteers get involved and share their time and expertise. To learn how you can be a part of improving the Temescal commercial area, call 860-7327 or email ttbid@california.com. —*Darlene Rios Drapkin*

Highrises, 800 Condos Coming to MacArthur BART

The City has sent out a notice calling for public input on the transit village development that is being planned for the MacArthur BART station. If built as proposed, the BART parking lot (and adjacent parcels along Telegraph Ave.) will be transformed into a seven-acre "village" complete with two highrises—one at 20 stories, the other at 22 stories—and 5-story buildings along Telegraph and 41st St. The project will provide 800 condo-units of high-density multi-family housing and 30,000 sq. ft. of ground floor commercial space. Approximately 20 percent of the condos would be designated as affordable housing.

Currently, the BART parking lot provides 600 parking spaces. The project proposes to reduce public parking for BART riders by half, to 300 spaces, while providing 730 parking spaces for residential, retail, and community use. A residential parking permit program, covering a 1/4-mile radius around the project site, has been proposed to minimize potential adverse BART parking impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.

As part of the City's environmental review process, the public is being asked to comment on this proposal. To voice concerns, offer opinions, or ask questions relating to this development as proposed, contact Natalie Fay, Senior Transportation Planner, CEDA, 250 Frank Ogawa Plaza, Suite 3315, Oakland, CA 94612; 238-2129; nfay@oaklandnet.com. Comments, in writing or via e-mail, must be received on or before March 16, 2006.

This project is certain to have a significant impact, positive or negative, on the Temescal and adjoining neighborhoods—perhaps the most significant since the building of Highway 24 in the 1960s. Make sure that your voice is heard.

To find out more about this project online, visit <http://www.oaklandnet.com/government/ceda/revised/planningzoning/MajorProjectsSection/macarthur.html>.

—*Jeff Norman*

Spring Happenings at the Library

Temescal neighbors are invited to visit the branch during the month of March to see *Squawk!: Artwork inspired by Oakland Renegade Poets*, an exhibit of 12 paintings by Oakland artist Nancy Mizuno Elliot. In these colorful, mixed-media paintings, Nancy "illustrates the renegade voices of living, historical, native, transplanted, famous, and not-so-famous Oakland poets," and she seeks to "honor those who have raised awareness by raising their voices." We will have a reception for people to meet Nancy and talk to her about her work on Monday, March 6, from 6:30 to 7:30 PM.

Another program is coming up on Saturday, March 25 from 10 AM to 1 PM. "The Art of Redesigning Clothing" is a workshop presented by Oakland designer Leta Hartley. She will demonstrate step-by-step methods to recreate garments as unique pieces of wearable art. Participants will learn how to reinvent clothing and transform off-the-rack clothes through fabric painting, beading, hand-sewing and lots of other creative embellishments.

Talented storyteller Willy Claflin and his puppets will perform at the Temescal library on Thursday, March 30 at 1 PM. Two-time winner of a Parents' Choice Gold Award, Willy delights audiences with his funny tales. Recommended for ages six and above.

Ty reports that The Tool Lending Library now has over 2700 tools available for check

out. Some new additions include a 10¼" circular saw, de-hatching rakes, new belt sanders, electric metal shears, multimeters, a laser level square, and an 8-foot level. And for those of you who have been waiting to wash off your decks, driveways, or walls, the two power washers, which were broken down for several weeks, are back in business. See you at the library! —*Sally Bean, Branch Manager*

New Community Grant Program

The Oakland Redevelopment Agency is pleased to launch the Neighborhood Project Initiative program (NPI) in the City of Oakland's Broadway/MacArthur/San Pablo Redevelopment Project Area (Broadway and Highway 24 from 27th to 42nd Streets, and San Pablo Avenue between 53rd and 67th Streets). The NPI program is a community grant program that funds small-scale physical improvements that benefit the community and are located within the redevelopment project area boundaries.

The NPI program grant awards are intended to support the blight reduction and beautification efforts of existing community and merchant organizations. The minimum grant award per project is \$1,000 and the maximum grant award is \$50,000. The submission deadline for grant applications is March 22, 2006. This is a pilot program. If it proves to be successful, there will likely be future opportunities to apply.

The program brochure and applications are available on the City of Oakland's website at <http://www.business2oakland.com/main/broadway.htm>, or by contacting Kathy Kleinbaum at 238-7185 or kkleinbaum@oaklandnet.com. —*Kathy Kleinbaum*

Neighbors File Appeal Over Proposed Development at Telegraph and 51st

Over 50 residents of Temescal, Rockridge, and upper Telegraph Ave. attended the Planning Commission hearing on January 18 in support of community concerns over a number of key unresolved issues with the 67-unit condo project proposed for Telegraph and 51st St. Over a dozen neighbors spoke at the hearing, voicing concerns that ranged from the project's excessive height and density, to traffic and pedestrian safety impacts, to zoning violations. A petition signed by 500 neighbors to reduce the project's scale also was presented to the commissioners.

Despite these efforts, the Planning Commission voted to approve the project, although with certain conditions. These included a reduction in height of the townhouses on Clarke St. from 41 to 37 feet, and re-routing the Rockridge Temescal Greenbelt extension through the project to 51st St. along a guaranteed public access pathway. While the developers will not be legally required to do so, they also stated at the hearing that they voluntarily would set the goal of making up to 25 percent of the units available for affordable housing.

While these concessions, lobbied hard for by a number of local groups, are significant, the Telegraph/51st Gateway Coalition, made up of both Temescal and Rockridge neighbors, felt that the Planning Commission in approving the project failed to account for a number of significant impacts on the community. Neighbors discovered, for instance, that the traffic analysis, which concluded that the project would have no significant impact on the four intersections it studied, appears to have been based in part on outdated traffic data. The traffic analysis also failed to study a number of factors affecting pedestrian safety on streets adjacent to the project.

Given these and other significant oversights, including the precedent this project will set for future development along Telegraph, Claremont, and Shattuck, the Coalition filed an appeal of the decision to the City Council on January 30. The appeal is tentatively scheduled to go before the City Council on March 21.

Meanwhile, Coalition members and the developers have continued to meet in the attempt to resolve height, traffic, and pedestrian safety issues. On February 2, the developers presented a redesign of the 65-foot corner tower that reduces its height to 61 feet. Further discussions between the developers and Coalition representatives are planned.

In December Councilmember Jane Brunner mediated two meetings between the developers and neighborhood representatives that resulted in the developers offering to reduce the heights of the townhouses on Clarke St. and re-route the Greenbelt pathway. She has offered to mediate further as needed.

For details about the appeal or to add your name to the petition to reduce the scale of the project, contact the Telegraph/51st Gateway Coalition at e-mail: jnorman@california.com or 653-7190.

—Jeff Norman

Project CIVIQ - Development at 51st and Telegraph

CIVIQ, the 67-unit mixed-use development proposed for Telegraph and 51st Street, was unanimously approved by the Planning Commission on January 18. Many neighbors spoke both for and against the project at the two-hour hearing. The Commission applauded neighbors and developers for the civil tone of the dialogue and collaborative engagement. As one of the commissioners noted, “You are 95 percent of the way to having agreement on everything and it is too bad it isn’t 100 percent.”

All of us developing the project have lived and worked in the neighborhood for many years. We initially designed the project to meet community values developed six years ago for the former site of the Pussycat Theater, including:

- Community Participation - held over 20 meetings and provided full public disclosure of plans.
- Mixed-Use; Encourage Diversity; Gathering Place - retail space at 51st & Telegraph; wide range of unit types from studios to three bedrooms; two new public plazas.
- Including the Children’s Hospital lot.
- Recognize Temescal Creek in Design - the plaza at 51st and Telegraph will recognize Temescal Creek.
- High Architectural Quality - significant design and high quality of materials.
- “Meet the Street” Design; Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendly - all street-level units accessible from the street, on-site bicycle parking, entire design encourages walking.
- Conforms to Zoning - project complies with General Plan.

We have also made several design changes in response to community requests. The most significant change is a rearrangement of the buildings to create a walkway extending Frog Park from Clarke Street to 51st Street, which we have proposed to deed to the City to allow 24/7 access. The height of some elements of the buildings has also been reduced.

We did not change the height of the building proposed for the corner of 51st Street and Telegraph, which has been a focus of neighborhood opposition. In response to opposition statements at the hearing, each of the Planning Commissioners made statements disagreeing with the opponents and support-

ing the need for a strong building at this huge intersection. That is our position as well.

The height and density of the project are essential to allow us to incorporate all of the other benefits desired by the community: the FROG Park walkway, two public plazas at the corner of 51st and Telegraph and along 51st, a wide mix of housing types, underground parking, sustainable materials, and energy efficiency. The density is necessary to generate the millions of dollars those features cost; the height is necessary to preserve open space.

While the opposition has been vocal, the project has strong community support and is also supported by the Sierra Club, the East Bay Workforce Housing Coalition, the Temescal Merchants Association, and Temescal/Telegraph Community Benefit Association. Virtually all of the small-business owners along Telegraph who are actively involved in trying to improve the retail district feel that we need more high-density, well-designed mixed-use buildings and residential development along Telegraph to support pedestrian-oriented businesses. That is the vision for the CIVIQ project.

—Roy Alper, Managing Member, Project CIVIQ

NPC to Hold Town Hall Meeting

Riddle: Why are bears in Yosemite Valley and thieves in Temescal alike? Answer: Both like to break into cars. The bears go for the peanut butter and jelly. The thieves go for your purses, cell phones and laptops. On February 9, Lieutenant James Meeks, the new police commander for North Oakland, surveyed cars parked near Children’s Hospital. He and his team found nine cars with an assortment of valuables left on the seats in full view! Please put your valuables in the car’s trunk!

The next Temescal Town Hall meeting will be held on March 18 at Faith Presbyterian Church at the corner of 49th and Webster Street. Come and meet Lieutenant Jim Meeks and our Problem Solving Officer, Debi Mack. Councilmember Jane Brunner’s assistant Zachary Wald will also be present. Come at 9:30 to meet neighbors and enjoy pastries and coffee. Business will begin at 10:00. One of our agenda items is the election of officers. We are looking for a few good people to fill two spots: Vice-Chair and two Officers-At-Large. We welcome anyone in the community who would like to fill these positions and help make Temescal a safer place to live.

—Jennifer Oberholzer and Donald Lowrey

Temescal Calendar

Thursdays, March 2-30, 6:30 PM. Contact improvisation dance class, focusing on sound and sight. \$15 drop-in fee or \$65 for the series. Temescal Arts Center, 48th at Telegraph. www.dancingfreedom.com.

Saturdays, March 4-25, 10:45 AM. Riki Bloom teaches "Authentic Movement", a dance class in the Somatics Series. \$20 drop-in fee. Temescal Arts Center, 48th at Telegraph. www.SomaticsSeries.org.

Monday, March 6, 6:30 PM. Reception for Oakland artist Nancy Mizuno Elliot, who presents *Squawk!*: Artwork inspired by Oakland Renegade Poets. The exhibit will be at the library for the month of March. Temescal Library, 5205 Telegraph. 597-5049.

Wednesday, March 8, 6 PM. Temescal Merchants Association monthly meeting. All are welcome. Temescal Library, 5205 Telegraph. 653-7196.

Thursday, March 9, 7 PM. Temescal Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) Steering Committee meeting. Everyone welcome. Faith Presbyterian Church, 49th and Webster. 420-6974.

Friday, March 10, 7:30 PM. Poetry Saloon. Bring a poem that you have written and one by someone else to share, or just come to enjoy. 472 44th Street (between Telegraph and Webster). 594-2200.

Saturday, March 18, 9:30 AM. Temescal Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) Town Hall Meeting. Officer elections will be held. Faith Presbyterian Church, 49th and Webster. 420-6974.

Saturday, March 18, 10 AM. Help monitor water quality in Temescal Creek. Meet at the south end of Lake Temescal Park. 459-3967 or temerk@mountaincurrent.net.

Saturday, March 25, 10 AM. Oakland designer Leta Hartley presents "The Art of Redesigning Clothing." Temescal Library, 5205 Telegraph. 597-5049.

Thursday, March 30, 1 PM. Storyteller Willy Claflin and his puppets will perform a program for children ages six and up. Temescal Library, 5205 Telegraph. 597-5049.

Wednesday, April 12, 6 PM. Temescal Merchants Association monthly meeting. All are welcome. Temescal Library, 5205 Telegraph. 653-7196.

Thursday, April 13, 7 PM. Temescal Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) Steering Committee meeting. Everyone welcome. Faith Presbyterian Church, 49th St. and Webster. 420-6974.

Friday, April 14, 7:30 PM. Poetry Saloon. Bring a poem that you have written and one by someone else to share, or just come to enjoy. 472 44th Street (between Telegraph and Webster). 594-2200.

Saturday, April 15, 10 AM. Help monitor water quality in Temescal Creek. Meet at the south end of Lake Temescal Park. 459-3967 or temerk@mountaincurrent.net.

Saturday, April 22, 9 AM. Earth Day Temescal Creek Cleanup. Meet at Temescal Creek where it runs through the DMV parking lot (at Claremont and Cavour). Sponsored by the DMV Neighborhood Association and the City of Oakland. A potluck lunch and goodbye party for Jackie and Tony Frietas and their dog Reina will follow. They are moving to the foothills this spring. They have been wonderful neighbors for over 20 years and will be terribly missed. 655-1767.

Studio One's Spring Session

The spring session program at Studio One Art Center continues 58 years of tradition in art making. We'll be offering family classes in theater, puppets, sculpture, and clay from April 3 to May 27. Additionally, an arts camp for children 6-12 and teens will be held from April 10 to 14. Evening classes will now run from 6:30 to 9:30 PM. You can register for spring classes by calling 597-5027 or visiting www.oaklandnet.com/parks.

—Tomyé Neal-Madison

Temescal Groups to Sponsor Oakland Mayoral Forum

The Oakland League of Women Voters, Temescal Neighbors Together, Studio One, and the Parent/Student Teacher's Association of Oakland Technical High School are co-sponsors for an upcoming Oakland Mayoral Forum. Invited candidates include Ron Dellums, Councilwoman Nancy Nadel, Councilman Ignacio De la Fuente, and any other mayoral candidates who have filed with the Alameda County Registrar of Voters by the deadline. This will be a great time to find out how our next mayor feels about issues of importance to the Temescal community. The Forum will take place at the end of April or the beginning of May with the location to be announced. For more information call Thad Shaffer at 601- 6465. —Judy Belcher

The Hidden Jewel of Park Day Summer Arts Camp

For the past 17 years Park Day Summer Arts Camp has been providing an arts-filled program for children in the heart of the Temescal community. Held on the campus of Park Day School, the camp offers an assortment of visual and performing-arts programs for children ages 6-13, as well as a counselor-in-training program for teens ages 13-16.

Professional local artists from diverse backgrounds teach the classes. Course offerings, which will change each week, may include: dance, printmaking, photography, video, painting, cartooning, origami, sculpture, and more. Both full-day and three-quarter-day programs are available.

Call 719-8652 to receive a brochure or check us out at www.ParkDaySummerArtsCamp.com. You will receive a 10 percent discount if you register by March 31.

—Moses LaSabra, Camp Director

Share Your Experience With Temescal Youth

Are you over 55? Do you want to make a difference in the lives of Temescal youth? Experience Corps Oakland is building a team of volunteers at Emerson Elementary School, and is looking for older adults willing to share their experience, love, and knowledge with young students. Available positions include everything from one-on-one tutoring to leading or assisting after-school enrichment activities. Experience Corps offers training, on-site support, and stipends for those willing to work 15 hours a week. Please contact Jessica at 495-4966 or jbullen_ec@yahoo.com for further information.

—Jessica Bullen

Join the Temescal Families Email Group

The Temescal area has an active email group. Please sign up and participate in the community, which has 200 members. It is a great way to organize, get referrals to local businesses, be notified of community activities, and be alerted to crime incidents, meetings, and local politics. To subscribe, send an email to: temescalfamilies-subscribe@yahoo.com.

—Edgar and Chris Pew

Help Support This Newsletter and TNT. Volunteers are doing the work of getting out this newsletter (and occasional fliers)—but we still need to pay the printer! If you value our community efforts, please consider making a donation. Any amount will help. Make your check payable to TNT, and send it with this form to: TNT, c/o 469 Rich St., Oakland, CA 94609. —Thank You!

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